



Robert Smudde - H3B <robert.smudde@gsa.gov>

Re: Records Inquiry

3 messages

Records Mailbox <records@gsa.gov>

Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 1:52 PM

To: Kelley Confer - QN <kelley.confer@gsa.gov>

Cc: Robert Smudde - H1FB <robert.smudde@gsa.gov>

Hi Kelley,

Robert Smudde (cced) is the Agency Records Officer. He will be able to address your question.

Robert,

Please cc me on your response.

On Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 8:28 AM Kelley Confer - QN <kelley.confer@gsa.gov> wrote:

Hi there,

(b) (5)

Thank you,
Kelley

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Kelley Confer
Office of Acquisition
[TTS](#) | [GSA](#)

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Deborah Lague
Supervisor, Records Management Program
Office of Accountability and Transparency (OAT)
Office of Administrative Services (OAS)
General Services Administration

Robert Smudde - H3B <robert.smudde@gsa.gov>

Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 3:23 PM

To: Records Mailbox <records@gsa.gov>

Cc: Kelley Confer - QN <kelley.confer@gsa.gov>

Hi Kelley,

All preserved records are subject to FOIA regardless of the technology (e.g., Slack or Google Hangouts) used to create them.

The majority of information in the agency is subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. There are eight exceptions that can be found here: <https://www.foia.gov/faq.html>

With regard to Slack and Google Chat (now Google Hangouts direct messages), communications in Slack are required to be preserved whereas direct messages in Google Hangouts direct are automatically deleted after 24 hours. The origin for this is that when GSA began using Google Chat

around 2011 it was not expected that people would use it for documenting business decisions and thus they were deleted after 24 hours. That practice continues today. **However, IF Google Chats are used for communications that constitute a record, the agency records management directive, OAS P 1820.1, says that those Google Chat messages should be preserved.**

The GSA Records Management directive can be found here: https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/OAS_P_1820.1_Records_Management_Directive_%28signed_3-7-2014%29.pdf (see page 8).

Also worth knowing is that GSA now also uses Google Hangout Groups, which are created for ongoing conversations between a group of users generally for long term collaboration with the ability to refer back to previous discussions. Conversations in Google Hangouts Chat Groups ARE saved automatically for records management purposes. However, users have the ability to delete these Group conversations, but should first consider the content of the conversation and determine whether or not it is a record before deleting.

I hope this answers your question,

Robert

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Robert Smudde
Agency Records Officer
Office of Accountability and Transparency
General Services Administration
(b) (6)
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Kelley Confer - QN <kelley.confer@gsa.gov>
To: Robert Smudde - H3B <robert.smudde@gsa.gov>
Cc: Records Mailbox <records@gsa.gov>

Thu, Nov 14, 2019 at 4:20 PM

Hi Robert,

This does help - thank you for your guidance!

Best,
Kelley

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